

17. (Currently amended) ~~The~~ A noise barrier apparatus of claim 37 ~~for preventing external noise from causing noise in an ear on a side of a user's head, the noise barrier apparatus comprising:~~

~~an ear adapter body having a first end and a second end forward of said first end and insertable into the ear canal of the ear, said ear adapter body defining an enclosed audio chamber including the ear canal of the ear, said ear adapter body further having,~~

~~an ear canal section adjacent said second end,~~

~~an outer ear section adjacent said first end, and~~

~~a concha section disposed between said ear canal and outer ear sections, whereby said ear canal section is disposed in the ear canal of the ear, the concha section is disposed adjacent the concha region of the ear, and the outer ear section is disposed outside the ear when said second end of said ear adapter body is inserted into the ear canal of the ear; and~~

~~a concha cushion to bear against the concha region of the ear, said concha cushion being mounted said concha section of said ear adapter body and positioned so as to be interposed between the concha region of the ear and said concha section and being configured to encircle the ear canal entrance when said second end of said ear adapter body is inserted into the ear canal;~~

~~said concha cushion being deformable so as to be conformable to the~~

~~concha region of the ear when held thereagainst~~

wherein said concha cushion comprises a material which is at least partially plastically deformable.

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 17 wherein said material of said concha cushion further comprises an at least partially plastically deformable material contained in a flexible sheath.

22. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 17 wherein said material of said concha cushion provides a damping ratio greater than or equal to 0.75.

23. (Currently amended) ~~The A~~ noise barrier apparatus of claim 38 for preventing external noise from causing noise in ears on opposing sides of a user's head, each of the ears having a concha region opening into an ear canal, said noise barrier apparatus comprising:

~~— a pair of noise barrier devices to be held against the opposing sides of the user's~~

~~head and engaged with the concha regions of the respective ears;~~

~~— a noise barrier device holding apparatus coupled to said noise barrier devices to hold said noise barrier devices against the opposing sides of the user's head and against the concha regions of the respective ears;~~

~~— wherein said noise barrier devices each respectively comprise;~~

~~— an ear adapter body having a first end and a second end forward of said first end and insertable into the ear canal of a respective one of the ears, said ear adapter body further having,~~

~~— an ear canal section adjacent said second end,~~

~~— an outer ear section adjacent said first end, and~~

~~— a concha section disposed between said ear canal section and said outer ear section,~~

~~— whereby said ear canal section is disposed in the ear canal of a respective ear, the concha section is disposed adjacent the concha region of the respective ear, and the outer ear section is disposed outside the respective ear when said second end of said ear adapter body is inserted into the respective ear canal of the respective ear, and~~

~~— a concha cushion mounted said concha section of said ear adapter body,~~

~~said concha cushion being positioned so as to be interposed between the concha region of the ear and said concha section and to encircle the ear canal of the ear when said second end of said ear adapter body is inserted into the ear canal,~~

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~~said concha cushion being deformable so as to conform to the concha region of the ear and comprising~~ wherein said concha cushion is of a material which is at least partially plastically deformable.

24. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 23, wherein each of said concha cushions is fabricated from a material which is at least partially plastically deformable and is encased in a flexible sheath.

25. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 23 further wherein each said concha cushion has a damping ratio greater than 0.75.

26. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 25, wherein each said concha cushion is fabricated from a material which is at least partially plastically deformable and encased in a flexible sheath.

27. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 25 further wherein each said concha cushion has a damping ratio greater than 1.0.

28. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 27, wherein each said concha cushion is fabricated from a material which is at least partially plastically deformable and encased in a flexible sheath.

29. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 23, wherein said noise barrier device holding apparatus further comprises:

ear tubes of a stethoscope.

30. (Previously presented) The noise barrier apparatus of claim 26, wherein said noise barrier device holding apparatus further comprises:

ear tubes of a stethoscope.

31 - 36. (Cancelled)

37. (New) A noise barrier apparatus for preventing external noise from causing noise in an ear on a side of a user's head, the noise barrier apparatus comprising:

an ear adapter body having a first end and a second end forward of said first end and insertable into the ear canal of the ear, said ear adapter body defining an

enclosed audio chamber including the ear canal of the ear, said ear adapter body further having,

an ear canal section adjacent said second end,

an outer ear section adjacent said first end, and

a concha section disposed between said ear canal and outer ear sections, whereby said ear canal section is disposed in the ear canal of the ear, the concha section is disposed adjacent the concha region of the ear, and the outer ear section is disposed outside the ear when said second end of said ear adapter body is inserted into the ear canal of the ear; and

a separate concha cushion to bear against the concha region of the ear, said concha cushion being mounted onto said concha section of said ear adapter body and positioned thereon so as to be interposed between the concha region of the ear and said concha section and being configured to encircle the ear canal entrance when said second end of said ear adapter body is inserted into the ear canal,

said concha cushion being deformable so as to be conformable to the concha region of the ear when held thereagainst.

38. (New) A noise barrier apparatus for preventing external noise from causing noise in ears on opposing sides of a user's head, each of the ears having a concha region

opening into an ear canal, said noise barrier apparatus comprising:

a pair of noise barrier devices to be held against the opposing sides of the user's head and engaged with the concha regions of the respective ears;

a noise barrier device holding apparatus coupled to said noise barrier devices to hold said noise barrier devices against the opposing sides of the user's head and against the concha regions of the respective ears;

wherein said noise barrier devices each respectively comprise,

an ear adapter body having a first end and a second end forward of said first end and insertable into the ear canal of a respective one of the ears, said ear adapter body further having,

an ear canal section adjacent said second end,

an outer ear section adjacent said first end, and

a concha section disposed between said ear canal section and said outer ear section,

whereby said ear canal section is disposed in the ear canal of a respective ear, the concha section is disposed adjacent the concha region of the respective ear, and the outer ear section is disposed outside the respective ear when said second end of said ear adapter body is inserted into the